



United States Mission to the OSCE

On the executions of Coy Westbrook, Adam Ward, Joshua Bishop, and Pablo Vasquez

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
April 7, 2016

Thank you to our colleagues from the delegations of Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Mongolia, San Marino and Switzerland for raising their concerns. As they noted, on March 9, the State of Texas executed Coy Westbrook for murdering Gloria Jean Coons, Diana Ruth Money, Antonio Cruz, Anthony Ray Rogers, and Kelly Hazlip in 1997.

On March 22, the State of Texas executed Adam Ward for the 2005 murder of Michael Walker. On March 31, the State of Georgia executed Joshua Bishop for the 1994 murder of Leverett Morrison. On April 6 the State of Texas executed Pablo Vasquez for the murder of then 12 year-old David Cardenas in 1998.

The United States recognizes the debate on the death penalty both within and among nations. We respect the views of our friends around this table. We remind colleagues that the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the United States is a party, provides for imposition of the death penalty for the most serious crimes when carried out pursuant to a final judgment rendered by a competent court, and accompanied by appropriate procedural safeguards and the observance of due process. This includes the right to seek pardon or commutation of sentence in all cases.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.